



Second Quarter, 2000
Volume 1, Issue 2

Welcome to the VINELINE!

This is the official newsletter of the Department of Corrections VINE Program, and we hope to make it a valuable and much-used source of information for Crime Victims and those who help them.

We want this newsletter to grow in a direction which will better help you, the victim's first line of support, and with your input and feedback, we will.

We invite you to send letters, essays, questions, suggestions, and other matters that you feel would benefit the Victim Support community. We invite suggestions regarding the content and format of future editions.

This is your newsletter, so let us know what you think.

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To request additional copies of this Newsletter, please contact us at:

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Vine Program Update

Stephen C. Evans

Program Administrator

The Department of Corrections VINE Program staff have been busy since publication of the first quarter newsletter. They have visited over a dozen jails, victim advocates and Commonwealth Attorneys.

The Program staff also attended the March 2000 Crime Victims Conference at the Hyatt in Lexington where numerous promotional items were handed out to participants. If you need additional items, please give us a call or e-mail us.

On April 17, 2000, the VINE Program employed Carol Buie as a computer systems support technician. Carol is the point of contact for the eastern region of the state and Donna West is the point of contact for the western region. If you have any questions about the VINE Program, technical or not, please give one of them a call.

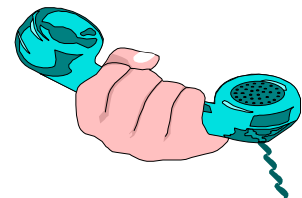
During the past ninety days, we have received calls from victims, advocates, Commonwealth Attorneys, and the public at large. We have worked very hard to

resolve issues related to the VINE Program. It should be noted that we receive excellent cooperation from the VINE Company, which is located in Louisville. Our objective, of course, is to make the VINE Program as efficient and accurate as possible.

We would like to thank Willis P. McKee, Jr., M.D., for his moving article in the last newsletter. Many people have mentioned to us how much they appreciated the article and expressed admiration for the work of Barbara Davis, Victim's Advocate.

We look forward to printing more articles concerning work being done across the state as the . . .

VINE Program continues to grow.



800-511-1670

Our Goal Is...

**To Proactively address, as a team,
the need to protect victim's rights to be safe.**

**To ensure complete and accurate information
in order that victims may stay informed.**

To promote statewide awareness of the VINE Program.

Welcome New Staff



Carol L. Buie

Carol L. Buie began working as a Systems Support Technician for the VINE Program on April 17, 2000. She comes to us from Finance and Administration, Governmental Services Center.

Carol has worked for the Commonwealth for thirteen years. Her prior work experience includes server and network administration positions in Education, Workforce Development and Military Affairs, Department for Emergency Management.

Her primary duties will be data verification in the eastern region of the Commonwealth. Carol's vast knowledge of computer technology will be an asset to the Department of Corrections.

Internet Sites of Interest . . .

United States Department of Justice/Office for Victims of Crime – “OVC administers the Crime Victims Fund authorized by the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA). OVC administers five grant programs to help crime victims, i.e., crime victim compensation, crime victim assistance, national scope training and technical assistance and demonstration programs, the children's justice and assistance act, and services to federal crime victims.” <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc/>

Criminal Justice Legal Foundation – “Nonprofit law organization promotes a balance between the rights of crime victims and the criminally accused. Read about cases and publications.” <http://www.cjlf.org/>

Nat'l Criminal Justice Reference Service – “Nat'l Criminal Justice Reference Service outlines its resources for crime victims. Find a directory of related services and organizations.” <http://ncjrs.org/victhome.htm>

The National Center for Victims of Crime – “Center provides victims of crime with information and resources on legal and professional assistance. Also offered are safety tips and strategies, literature regarding victims of crime and organization membership information.” <http://www.nvc.org/>

The Global Corrections Resource - “Jail.net is looking for a Law Enforcement Professional from this state to help with updating State Information and keeping up with State Training dates.” <http://www.jail.net/KY/>

Kentucky Justice Cabinet – “The Justice Cabinet is structured to provide the citizens of the Commonwealth a safe, secure environment in which to live, work and raise their families.” <http://www.jus.state.ky.us/>

Kentucky Attorney General – “The Attorney General provides legal opinions to public officials to assist them in the performance of their duties.” <http://www.law.state.ky.us/>

Kentucky Department of Corrections – “The Department of Corrections is responsible for managing the daily operations of the state correctional institutions and a variety of community-based services.” <http://www.cor.state.ky.us/>

Corrections Connection – “Find news about jail administration and learn more about this professional association for jail employees.” <http://www.corrections.com>

Victim's Advocacy – “Kentucky Attorney General site with links to aid crime victim advocates and victims. Excellent listing of national toll free telephone numbers.” <http://www.law.state.ky.us/victims/Default.htm>

Advocates Touching the Lives of Victims

By Morris E. Burton
Franklin County Commonwealth Attorney

I read with interest in the inaugural issue of VINELINE the remarks of Dr. Will McKee, which resurrected sad memories of the tragedy which Will and the other members of his family suffered. It was reassuring to me that the Victim Advocacy Program had impacted the McKee family in such a positive manner. Barbara Davis is to be commended for the fine work she did on their behalf.

I had been made aware of Will's feelings toward Barbara and the fine service that she had provided for them in a conversation with him. This took place at a meeting of a support group for families for homicide victims which our Victim Advocates, Terri Jacobs and Betty Reynolds, had established. Dr. McKee's active participation in that support group was not only beneficial to the staff that put it together but to all the other folks who chose to be a part of it.

We had no Victim Advocates in Franklin County until the '90s, when it was decided that Jim Boyd, the County Attorney, and I would share a Victim Advocate. Terri Jacobs was hired to that position. It wasn't long before it became apparent that one person, however conscientious and dedicated, could not handle the caseload. At that time, we added Betty Reynolds to the team. Both Terri and Betty have, since the time of their employment, provided exemplary services in an area, which literally cries out for competent and caring attention.

The first full realization I had for the time and attention provided by our Advocates to various families occurred when a teenage girl was reported missing. This was under circumstances where foul play was suspected, and her body was located, after an extended period in a nearby county. During the investigation of the case and the extended proceedings in that nearby county, Terri Jacobs acted as our sole advocate. She spent untold hours in both counties providing services to a family who had experienced the ultimate of all tragedies, the death of a child. Since then, our advocates have been called upon in case after case to provide caring and compassionate service to victims of violent crime as well as families who have experienced the loss of loved ones at the hands of criminals.



Left to right: Morris E. Burton, Betty Reynolds and Terri Jacobs

Of course, these services are not only to the victims and their families, but, to my assistants and me. This is necessary since certain duties have been imposed upon all Attorneys for the Commonwealth by the General Assembly, which related to victims and witnesses in KRS 421.500. The first became law in 1986 and was expanded rather significantly in the 1998 session. If there are Commonwealth Attorneys, County Attorneys, or any of their assistants who are not availing themselves of the services of the competent Victim Advocates, I would certainly recommend that they be utilized. Specific helpful ways are in the area of notification to the victims and witnesses of all types of proceedings and other relevant occurrences which are set forth in KRS 421.500(5), and many of these are items most of us would not even like to think about.

As an avid observer and analyzer of human nature, I find that one of the most interesting aspects of the interaction between victims, their families and the Victim Advocates is the bond that almost always invariably develops, especially in the more serious cases. One example, which speaks volumes, occurred a couple of weeks ago when I walked into the Victim Advocates' office as Betty was taking a message from their answering machine. The message was from a young lady whose former live-in boyfriend had recently been convicted of felony offenses arising from a domestic violence situation. The message went like this: "Hey, this is _____. Sorry I missed you all when I stopped by. I brought you some candles and a swag. I left them in the County Attorney's office. Love ya."

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the VINE?

VINE stands for **V**ictim **I**nformation and **N**otification **E**veryday. It is an automated Victim Notification service. It is a computer system that makes inmate information available twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, and alerts victims when the status of any inmate changes.

How do victims retrieve inmate information and register to be notified?

They call a toll free number and the information is provided by the computer automated system. The computer prompts the victim for registration to be notified upon an inmate's release, or change in status.

Does the VINE program monitor county facilities or state prisons?

The program monitors both, separately. Victims may call one number and receive information regardless of whether the inmate is housed in county jail or state facility. The number for the entire state is 1-800-511-1670.

What other communities have the VINE program?

Jefferson County, Kentucky pioneered the program in 1994. The Kentucky Department of Corrections expanded the system statewide in 1996. Since then communities in New Jersey, California, Arizona, North Carolina, Wisconsin, Texas, South Carolina, Florida, Michigan, Georgia, Indiana, New York, Colorado, Minnesota, and other states have committed to the system. In all, thirty-five states utilize the VINE system in some form.

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